

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2322

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PO

SUBJ: NEW COUNCIL OF MINISTERS PROCEDURES

1. PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES HAS DECIDED ON NEW PROCEDURES FOR THE WORK OF THE CABINET. IN THE FUTURE, THE 21-MEMBER CABINET WILL NO LONGER MEET IN FULL SESSION WEEKLY TO DEAL WITH LEGISLATIVE MATTERS. THE PRIME MINISTER WAS DISSATISFIED WITH THE OLD PROCEDURE. HE BELIEVED THAT INTER-PARTY CONFLICTS WERE PLAYED OUT IN CABINET SESSIONS TO THE DETRIMENT OF EFFICIENCY.

2. IN THE NAME OF DECENTRALIZATION, RAPIDITY, AND EFFICIENCY A RESTRICTED GROUP OF MINISTERS WILL MEET WEEKLY TO SET LEGISLATIVE POLICY. THIS MINI-COUNCIL WILL CONSIST OF THE PRIME
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MINISTER, THE FOUR MINISTERS WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, THREE MILITARY

MINISTERS IN THE GOVERNMENT (WHICH ONES NOT SPECIFIED), AND INFORMATION MINISTER JESUINO, WHO WILL PARTICIPATE WITHOUT VOTE. AS APPROPRIATE, OTHER MINISTERS MAY BE INVITED TO SIT IN.

3. THE MINI-COUNCIL WILL TAKE LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES. ITS DECISIONS WILL BE RATIFIED BY THE OTHER MINISTERS. IF A MAJORITY APPROVE, THE LEGISLATION IS PASSED. IN NO MAJORITY IS REACHED, THE MATTER IS PASSED ON FOR RESOLUTION TO THE FULL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, WHICH WILL MEET ON A REGULAR BASIS EVERY 15 DAYS. UNDER THE NEW SCHEME, THE FULL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WILL BE MORE OF AN EXECUTIVE-ADMINISTRATIVE THAN A LEGISLATIVE MECHANISM.

4. THE NEW SYSTEM ALSO ENVISAGES SPECIALIZED SUB-GROUPS OF MINISTERS ORGANIZED ON A FUNCTIONAL BASIS, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD.

5. COMMENT: THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ACCORDING TO ALL SIGNS WILL BE THE PRINCIPAL ACTION AGENCY IN THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FIELD FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WHAT ROOM FOR INITIATIVE REMAINS FOR THE CABINET, AND PARTICULARLY FOR THE MINI-COUNCIL IS NOT CLEAR YET. PRESUMABLY SOME COORDINATION MECHANISM WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO LINK THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AND THE CABINET, ALTHOUGH THE PRIME MINISTER IS A NATURAL LINK.

6. THE NEW PROCEDURES OF THE COUNCIL APPEAR MORE EFFICIENT, WILL PROBABLY REDUCE PARTISAN POLITICAL FIGHTS, AND ASSURE MILITARY DOMINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

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